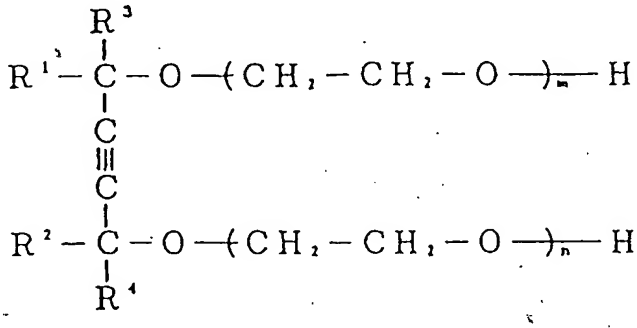
IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (previously presented) An aqueous ink composition comprising at least water, a first polymer, a second polymer or copolymer which is a sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer, a pigment dispersed by the first polymer, and an ultra-penetrating agent, wherein the sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer is present in the form of an emulsion, and wherein the ultra-penetrating agent is a combination of a compound represented by the following formula (1) and triethylene glycol monobutyl ether:



(1)

wherein, $0 \leq m + n \leq 50$, and R^1, R^2, R^3 and R^4 each independently is an alkyl group.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (original) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer is at least one of a diene-based, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer and a non-diene-based, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer.

Claim 4 (original) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 3, wherein the non-diene-based, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer is an acryl-based, sulfonyl group-containing (co) polymer.

Claim 5 (currently amended) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the pigment dispersed by the first polymer is a pigment dispersed in an aqueous medium by an acrylic (co) polymer having an acid value of 100 or more.

Claims 6 and 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (original) A recording process comprising recording an image by an ink jet recording process using an aqueous ink composition according to claim 1.

Claim 9 (original) An ink cartridge containing an aqueous ink composition according to claim 1.

Claim 10 (original) A recorded article having an image recorded by an aqueous ink composition according to claim 1.